

B 3297

OFFICERS' QUARTERS NO. 1
FORT SCOTT, KANSAS

by
Sally Johnson Ketcham

Furnishing Plan
Section F

October, 1973
Omaha, Nebraska

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
SECTION F INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION . .	1
Use of flowers and plants	1
"Living History"	2
National Park Service manual	4
Special protection	5
Tour plan	6
TOUR PLAN	7
ADDENDUM	10
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION

Officers' Quarters No. 1 is set across the old parade ground of Fort Scott; and visitors will be attracted to the handsome structure, upon arriving at the post. The furnishings should be installed to interpret life in this particular set of quarters by a particular family, the Swords. Many of the military aspects of the history of Fort Scott will be interpreted elsewhere in the area. The presence of the military in Officers' Quarters No. 1 is important; but it is only one phase in the interpretation of the quarters. The structure is first an ante-bellum home on the then western frontier. The role played by the courageous women, who accompanied their husbands on hazardous tours of duty, and the presence of children, who learned to adapt to new situations as a matter of course, is part of the Fort Scott story also.

Basic to any refurnished historic home is an avoidance of "artificiality." When the rooms are refurnished, they should have an air of casualness about them. As in all homes, there may be a degree of untidyness. Vases of flowers add a pleasant fragrance to rooms and should be used whenever possible. All floral arrangements, however, should be used with restraint. Sometimes the assistance of local garden clubs can be enlisted to provide floral arrangements for

the house. Care should be taken that the flowers are never "overdone" or allowed to dominate a room. Undoubtedly, Mrs. Swords enjoyed having flowers and fall leaves in her house; but she probably had small bouquets. When flowers are being arranged, the blossoms may be spread on the dining table to allow visitors to see the vases being filled. In the fall, weeds and flowers may be dried and pressed, as part of Mrs. Swords' "botanizing" activities. All flowers should be restricted to those that would have been found at Fort Scott or in the surrounding prairies, c. 1845.

The plants recommended for the front gallery are historically authentic; and these should be replaced. Peach trees are mentioned in one of Charlotte Swords' letters and should be replanted in the yard. A grounds study of the fort is desirable; and undoubtedly such a study would recommend the restoration of small vegetable gardens in the back.

"Living History" has assumed great popularity in historic areas around the country. Used in the context of the historic past of an area, it is effective if not over-staged and overdone. The kitchen of the quarters would adapt to living history quite naturally. With the fireplace burning, pots of beans, soup, or stew could simmer throughout the day; bread could be made on the

table and baked in the fire; and a small chicken could be roasted over the flames. Cooking odors would be noticeable throughout the house, as they were one hundred and thirty years ago.

When the outbuildings in the rear are restored, it may be possible to have horses, a cow, and some chickens in the backyard. To involve visitors in the past activities, children might be permitted to gather eggs, milk the cow, feed the animals, or even take a hand at churning butter. The eggs, butter, and milk could be used as part of the house furnishings.

At all times, the house should look normal. Interpreters, unless they are uniformed guides, should be going about the regular tasks of the day. Costumed interpreters might polish saddles, bridles, and harness, chop firewood for the house, weed gardens, and work around the stables. Inside the house, servants, also in costume, might change bed linens, clean with old-time devices, wash windows, bring coal to fireplaces, as well as cook.

Once a month, a kettle might be hauled to the backyard, filled with water, placed over a fire, and the wash begun.

Potato starch could be made and used; and later, irons could be heated over the kitchen fire to iron the washing in the presence of visitors. The use of old artifacts should be judicious, since continued use naturally will

cause them to wear out.

Interpreters should not be promoting handicrafts or arts for visitors' entertainment. Candles were part of army rations and could be purchased at the sutler's store also. It is doubtful candles would have been molded by the Swords' servants. The same applies to spinning and weaving, since material could be purchased; and the Swords had the financial means to do so. Artificial light is to be avoided as much as possible. When days are overcast, supplemental lighting may be provided by tallow candles, as it would have been in 1845. To alleviate the danger of fire when candles are lit, blown-glass hurricane shades may be set around the candlesticks, even though they are not recommended for the house furnishings on a regular basis. Fires in the fireplaces will add a "homey" note to the house on chilly days. A bucket filled with coal may be set in the basement hallway to bring to the fireplaces when needed.

The installation, maintenance and protection of Officers' Quarters No. 1 shall be consistent with U. S. National Park Service policies. At the present time, a manual is being prepared by the Branch of Museum Operations to cover many of the installation and maintenance problems that arise in historic homes. Famili-

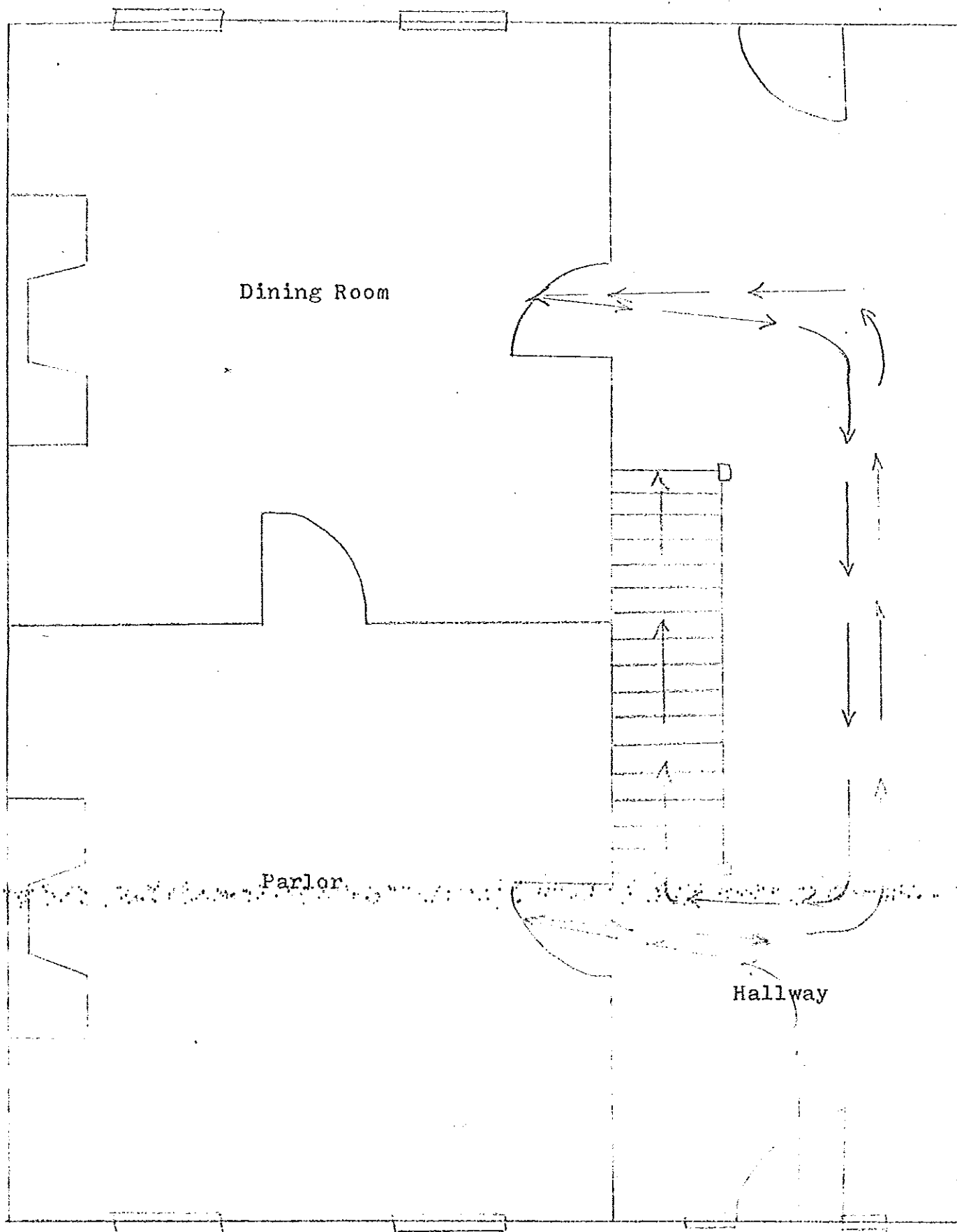
arity with the housekeeping problems of historic homes and the experience and expertise gained by National Park Service personnel dictates that the policies set forth in this manual be adhered to at Fort Scott. These policies should be applied to the rotation of linens, hanging of draperies, use of artifacts, etc.

Protection of historic homes is always a problem. Alert guides are the best protection; and occasionally unobtrusive wiring of items to tables or shelves may prevent theft of small articles. In Officers' Quarters No. 1, the items on the table in the hallway are vulnerable to both breakage and theft. The Dragoon officer's cap and gloves may be sewed to the table cover with fine thread in such a way that it cannot be seen. Vases will have to be set firmly on the table and visitors warned of their presence. Visitors should not be allowed to seat themselves on the chairs in the hall, although it may be desirable to have benches on the front gallery for elderly persons to use, while waiting to begin their tour of the house.

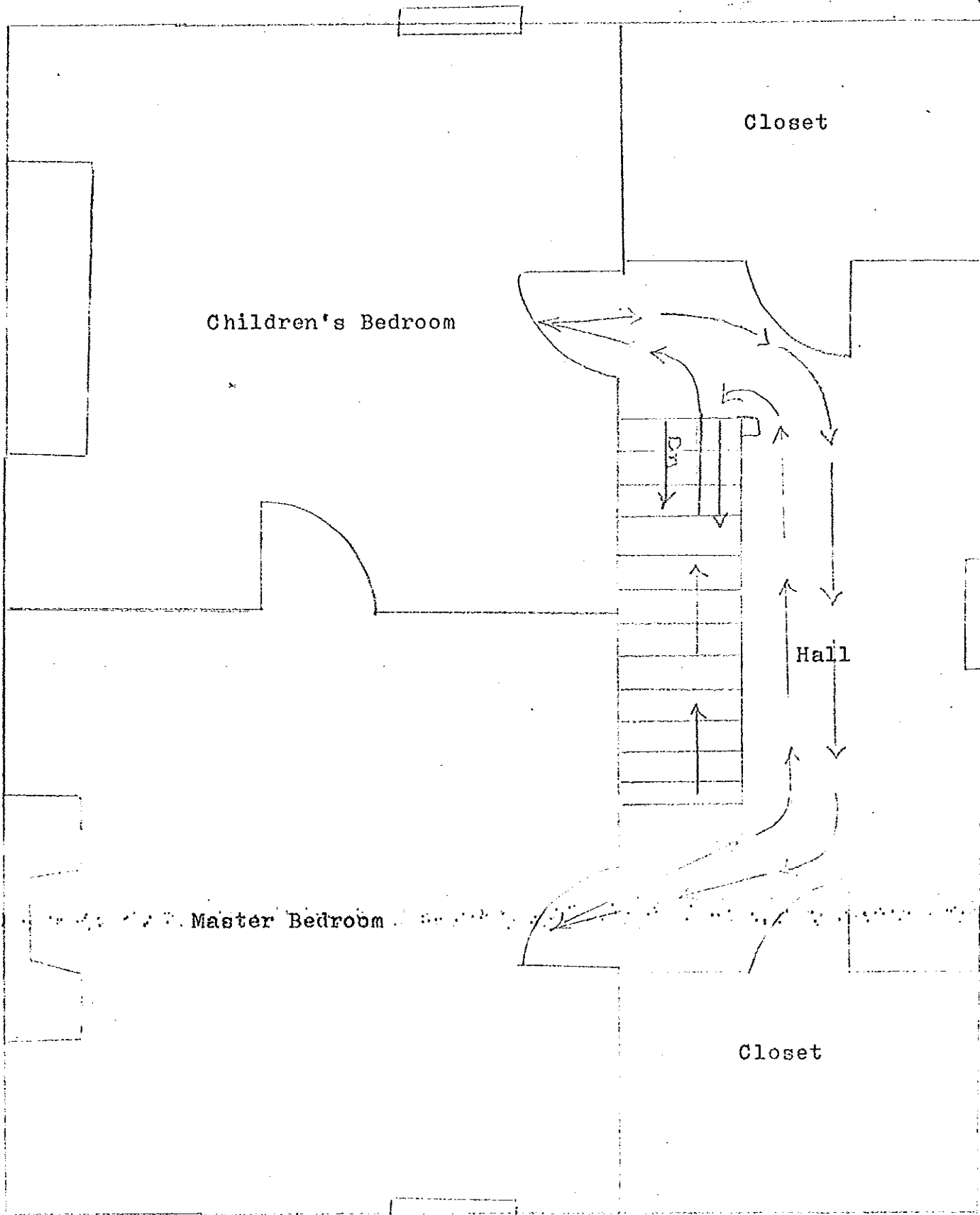
Fortunately, the easily removed furnishings in almost all the rooms are far from visitor access and do not pose a real problem, if the rooms are protected by barriers. Lanterns and some items in the halls may be

susceptible to theft and should be wired unobtrusively to the pegs or nails from which they hang. Small items, such as toy wagons, game bags, etc., that might have been suggested for the hallways in the furnishing plan have not been recommended, because they might prove hazardous to elderly visitors. The benches on the back porch should be sturdy enough to accommodate persons who have tired and wish to rest before continuing on with their tour of the fort area.

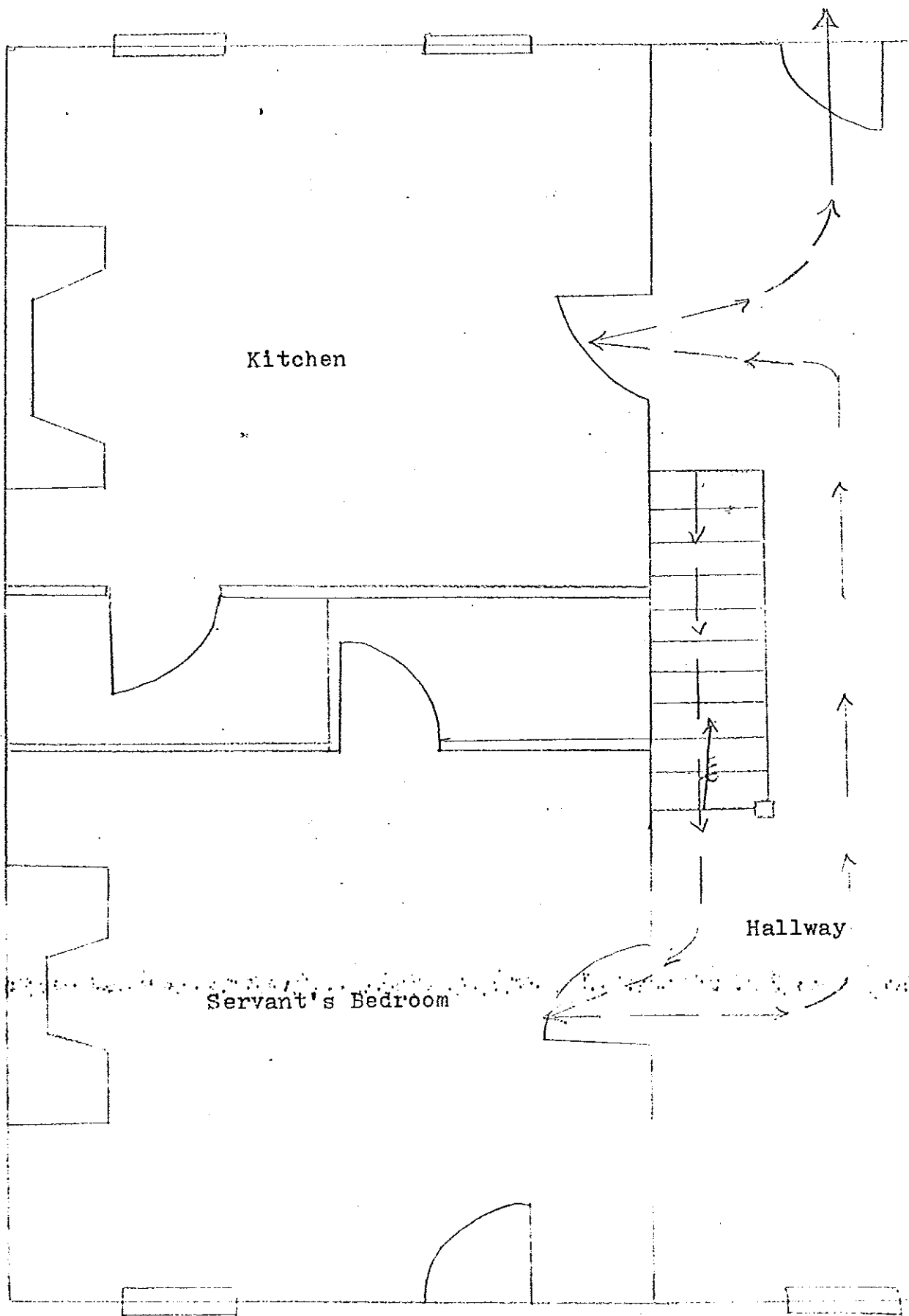
The tour plan suggests that interpretation begin on the first floor of the structure. The tour concludes at the basement rear, so that there will not be a congestion of people in the front yard or at the gate on busy days.



THE FIRST FLOOR



THE SECOND FLOOR



THE BASEMENT

ADDENDUM

ADDENDUM

Recently inquiries were made to the United States Military Academy at West Point regarding any pictures that might be attributed to Thomas Swords as the artist. To date the response has been unrewarding. A catalogue of his works is presently unavailable. In the furnishing plan, however, allowance has been made for the fact that his paintings may be discovered and acquired or copied for use in the house. The only known picture of Thomas Swords at West Point is an oil portrait of him in a uniform of the 1830's or pre-Mexican War. This is in the USMA Museum Collections.^{1/} Since the portrait was painted in the 1830's, it is possible that the picture hung in the quarters at Fort Scott. National Park Service personnel might wish to explore the possibility of acquiring this portrait on loan from the Academy to use at Fort Scott. It would be the only Sword-owned furnishing the house that is known. If a loan cannot be arranged, the portrait should be copied and suitably framed. It then may be hung in the Swords' bedroom over the mantel.

^{1/} Letter dated October 4, 1973, from Mrs. Marie T. Capps, Map and Manuscript Librarian, USMA Library, to writer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Baldwin, Alice Blackwood, Memoirs of the Late Frank D. Baldwin, Major General, U.S.A. Los Angeles: Wetzel Publishing Company, 1929.

Biddle, Ellen McGowan, Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1907.

Blake, Sylvia Dugger, Flow-Blue. Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1971.

Boyd, Mrs. Orsemus Bronson, Cavalry Life in Tent and Field. New York: J. Selwin Tait & Sons, 1894.

Cooke, Phillip St. George, Scenes and Adventures in the Army; or, Romance of Military Life. Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1859.

Custer, Elizabeth B., Following the Guidon. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1890.

_____, Tenting on the Plains or General Custer in Kansas and Texas. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1895.

Dunton, William Rush, Old Quilts. Catonsville, Md.: Published by author, 1946.

Gloag, John, A Short Dictionary of Furniture. New York: Bonanza, 1965.

Hall, Carrie A. and Kretsinger, Rose G., The Romance of the Patchwork Quilt in America. New York: Bonanza Books, 1935.

Hayward, Arthur H., Colonial Lighting. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1962.

Jackson, Mary L., If Dishes Could Talk. Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1971.

King, Captain Charles, An Army Wife. London: F. Tennyson Neely, 1896.

_____, Trials of a Staff-Officer. Philadelphia: L. R. Hamersly & Company, 1891.

Lane, Lydia Spencer, I Married a Soldier or Old Days in the Old Army. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1893.

McClinton, Katharine Morrison, Antique Collecting for Everyone. New York: Bonanza Books, 1951.

_____, Antiques of American Childhood. New York: Bramhall House, 1970.

McKay, R. H., Little Pills, an Army Story. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Headlight, 1918.

Mattes, Merrill J., Indians, Infants and Infantry. Denver: Fred A. Rosenstock, 1960.

Meyers, Augustus, Ten Years in the Ranks U. S. Army. New York: The Stirling Press, 1914.

Miller, Edgar G., American Antique Furniture, Vols. I & II. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966.

Nutting, Wallace, Furniture Treasury, Vol. II. New York: MacMillan Company, 1948.

Ogden, H. A. and Nelson, Henry Loomis, Uniforms of the United States Army. New York: M. P. Press, Inc., 1959.

Ormsbee, Thomas H., Field Guide to Early American Furniture. New York: Bonanza Books, 1951.

_____, Field Guide to American Victorian Furniture. New York: Bonanza Books, 1952.

Otto, Celia Jackson, American Furniture of the Nineteenth Century. New York: Castle Books, 1965.

Peter, Mary, Collecting Victoriana. New York: Frederick Praeger, 1968.

Prucha, Francis Paul (Ed.), Army Life on the Western Frontier. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958.

Risch, Erna, Quartermaster Support of the Army-A History of the Corps 1775-1939. Washington: G. P. O., 1962.

Roe, Frances M. A., Army Letters from an Officer's Wife. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1909.

Shull, Thelma, Victorian Antiques. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1963.

Steele, James W., Frontier Army Sketches. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Company, 1883.

Warman, Edwin G., Warman's Tenth Antiques and Their Current Prices. Uniontown, Pa.: E. G. Warman Publishing Co., 1970.

Winchester, Alice, How to Know American Antiques. New York: The New American Library, 1951.

Magazines

De Jonge, Eric, "Country Things," Antiques. Reprinted.

King, Captain Charles, "From the Ranks," Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, December, 1887.

Mattison, Ray (Ed.), "An Army Wife on the Upper Missouri," North Dakota History, XX, 191-220.

"Popular Antiques at the Henry Ford Museum," The Antiques Journal, June, 1959. Reprinted.

Manuscripts

"Furnishing Plan for the Bishop White House, Appendixes," Independence National Historical Park (December, 1961).

Letters to Lt. A. R. Johnston from Thomas and Charlotte Swords (1842-1846) in the manuscript collections of the United States Military Academy, West Point.

"A Master Plan: Fort Scott Historical Park Kansas," National Park Service (June, 1967).

Quartermaster Consolidated File, Record Group 92, National Archives.

Thompson, Erwin N., "Fort Scott, Kansas, Site Identification and Evaluation" (February 15, 1967).

Vogdes, Ada Adelaide, "Journal," manuscript in collections

of Huntington Library, California.